

The Weekly Tidings

Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

www.htelc.com

22 Fox Run Road * Newington, NH 03801 * 603-436-1704

office@htelc.com

Come Together, Grow in Faith, Serve the LORD

Pastor Luther's Article: January 7, 2024

This Sunday, we celebrate the "Feast of the Baptism of our Lord," which always occurs on the first Sunday after the Epiphany. This year our gospel text for this day comes from the evangelist Mark, who begins his gospel, not with the nativity scene, but rather with an account of Jesus being baptized in the River Jordan by John the Baptist. With great drama, Mark tells us that, as Jesus was coming up out of the water, "he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'" Mark 1:10-11.



We are a church whose life is centered in this Beloved Son of God, Jesus Christ. And just as Jesus was baptized, we are too. And, as we emerge from the baptismal waters, we are empowered and invited by the Holy Spirit to share in Christ's life and in his transforming work to heal our broken world.

Our baptism is thus not a "one and done" event, but rather sets us out on a lifelong journey with Christ and His Church. Living our baptismal covenant means growing in our faith together and supporting one another in practices of discipleship.

For centuries, the Church has set aside this particular "feast day" for baptisms, confirmations, and for welcoming new members to the Church. And so, this Sunday we are overjoyed to baptize VJ Strehl, to confirm Adrianna Grace Marcus, and to welcome sixteen new members to the congregation, whose names are listed below.

Let us praise God for the gift of each of these brothers and sisters in Christ and offer thanks for this great sign of vitality and new life in our Church!

(see the inside page for a list of all new members, baptized, and confirmands)

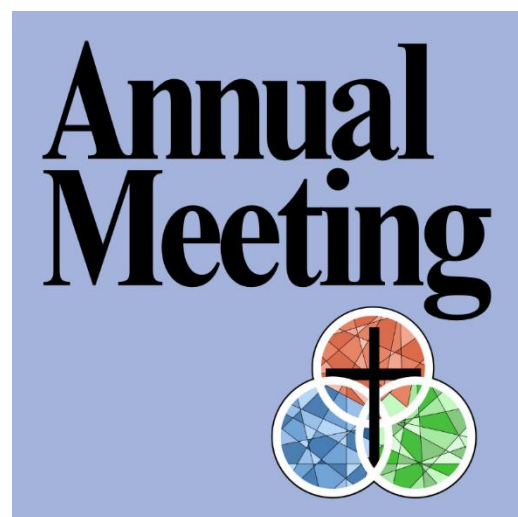
New Members: Chris Dunn, Linnea Richardson, Rani Marcus, Scott Marcus, Lena Olsson, Sue Kelsch, Kem Taylor, Judy Yovichich, Eileen Kackenmeister, Carl Kackenmeister, VJ Strehl, Craig Strehl, April Murphy, Meredith Goodwin, Pamela Brouker, & Julie Anderson.

Confirmation: Adrianna Grace Marcus.

Baptized into Christ: VJ Strehl.

Budget Forum & Annual Meeting

This Sunday, January 21, 2024, we will be holding the annual budget forum as we prepare for the annual meeting scheduled for the next Sunday, January 28. For those of you who are not familiar with this tradition, we introduced this annual session several years back to allow for more discussion time about our planned spending for the upcoming year. The budget forum provides the opportunity for everyone to study the spending plan proposed by the congregation council for the upcoming year, to ask questions, and make suggestions. This session is for discussion only; no motions will be entertained. If you are unable to attend the session in person, you will be able to participate virtually. Please watch for directions describing how to access the meeting on Sunday morning.



The following Sunday, January 28 we will hold our annual meeting. In order to conduct business at the meeting, we must have a quorum of members who sign in and are present.

Only members of Holy Trinity are eligible to vote. Several motions related to the budget along with a vote to accept new council members will be held at the meeting. If you are unable to attend the annual meeting in person, you will be able to attend and vote virtually. Please watch for directions describing how to access the meeting.

Women's Retreat at Calumet March 1-3

Is your life a maze or a labyrinth? Join us for a fun filled weekend at Calumet just about an hour north of HTELC on beautiful Lake Ossipee. The cost for the weekend is \$190 that includes 2 nights lodging and meals. Please see the poster in the gathering area for all the details. Sign up by getting the registration form to Leslie Carson by February 18. Questions? Leslie Carson at carsonsl@maine.rr.com

Property Team

As I prepared to write this article for the Tidings, I was trying to think of a single image that might give the reader a sense of my current impression of things in the property sphere at Holy Trinity. All manner of images came to mind, including but not limited to Sisyphus perpetually pushing that giant rock up a hill. I eventually settled on an iceberg as a suitable image. In my mind's eye the portion of the iceberg exposed above the water represents the known, identified property tasks to be addressed at any given time. The much larger underwater portion of the iceberg represents the unseen, unknown property tasks waiting to be identified and addressed. What I find interesting about an iceberg is its typical life cycle. It is born by breaking off of a large ice source ... think glacier ... and floats around mostly harmless, out of sight and mind except for some high impact, high visibility cases ... think Titanic ... where they demand some attention. In my image a smallish cadre of individuals are riding along with the exposed portion of the iceberg, chipping away at the ice and working to diminish it. They chip where they feel it is best to chip at any given time, but there is so much to chip, it is very difficult to pick a spot or even prioritize where to chip. One piece of ice looks pretty much like every other piece of ice when there is so much of it! And for each unit of ice that can be removed, an equal unit of ice rises from the depths to replace it!



The strength and weakness of the iceberg analogy lie in the rest of its life cycle. We know that the iceberg eventually melts away, and no matter how much time and effort is expended on it, it disappears naturally with time. The strength of the analogy is that it depicts what I often think of as "time-sort". Time has a way of sorting out what is and is not important. For example, a task on the Property Team "to-do" list ... our own little iceberg ... includes replacement of rain gutters on one side of the main entry to the church. These gutters were damaged by winter ice and snow load years ago and were removed thinking they were not really needed. The gutter replacement task has remained in time-sort for these many years. Periodically, we have some water intrusion issues in the basement, most recently last week, to remind us of why the gutters were installed in the first place. If the basement water problem had not arisen, the gutter replacement task may well have died in time-sort. The down side to time-sort is the tendency to minimize or obscure the importance or significance of some items on the to-do list. Some items will, in fact, disappear with time, but others will come back to haunt us if they are not resolved in some reasonable time period.

Someone once suggested to me that to-do lists will always grow with time because there are always more folks thinking of items for the list than there are folks to do whatever is needed to get items off the list. There is certainly some truth to that observation. As I have suggested many times over the past few years, we have very limited resources to work down our to-do list, but we keep riding our iceberg to wherever it is bound. Dave Mercer, Property Team Leader (Pro Tempore)

Prayer Concerns

Health Issues: Franklyn Vosburg, Jerry Schock, Alice Peterson, Don Gindlesperger, Richard Anderson, Dave Smith, Hazel Larson, Leo Larson, Rani Marcus, Shirley Jackson, Lynda Johnson. **Homebound:** Carol Saufley, Barbara Werdelin, Dave & Joyce Rivoire, Anita Lindstrom, Judy Hollister, Jean Klein, Steve Bush, June Slipp.

Military: Josh Bretz, Jacob Schankis, Jessica Chabot, Ian Connors.

Partners in Ministry: ELCA, New England Synod, Ismani Congregation in Tanzania, Imanuel Indonesian Lutheran Church, Ascentria Care Alliance, Camp Calumet, Operation Blessing, Crossroads, Dover Friendly Kitchen, Good News Garage, Seacoast Family Promise, Salvation Army, & Lutheran World Relief.

Friends: Phil Cahners (Bobbie Febbo's son-in-law), David Roth (Bonnie Sanders' brother), Janis (friend of Eileen & Carl Kackenmeister), Erin Goodman (Jessica Feeley's friend), Róisín Ruane (April Murphy's friend).

Calendar at-a-glance

Sun. Jan. 21, 10:30 AM: Congregational Budget Meeting

Sun. Jan. 28, 10:30 AM: Annual Meeting

Sunday Worship, Sundays at 9:30 AM

Wednesday Bible Study, Wednesdays at 9:30 AM

Property Team, Thursdays at 9:00 AM until *about* noon.

Monthly Attendance & Offering

Sunday, December 10:	110 (<i>In-Person</i>) + 16 (<i>Online</i>) = 126	Offering: \$3,819.25
Sunday, December 17:	90 (<i>In-Person</i>) + 27 (<i>Online</i>) = 117	Offering: \$16,604.05
Sunday, December 24:	17 (9:30 AM) + 58 (5:00 PM) + 109 (8:00 PM) + 60 (online)	
	Total: 234	Offering: \$6,221.05
Sunday, December 31:	64 (<i>In-Person</i>) + 15 (<i>Online</i>) = 79	Offering: \$5,595.70
Sunday, January 7: (snow)	55 (<i>est. over Zoom</i>) + 15 (<i>YouTube</i>) = 70	Offering: \$3,562.95